Handsome Devil by buckyjbarnnes

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Billy is the danger he is always talking about, and somehow, Steve’s always being surrounded by danger. Steve's not so sure he hates it anymore.

Handsome Devil

Author's Note:

> i can't stop writing, reading or thinking about this two dumbasses...god help me please. also, i know i'm using yet another song title as a title for my fic, but i just love the song very much (there's also a movie, which is really fuckin good, go watch it) and it fits just right.
>
> I proof-read this once lmao and english is not my first language, so excuse any mistakes. Also, if you like, please leave a comment!! :)

Billy is the danger he is always talking about, and somehow, Steve's always being surrounded by danger.

First it was last year, with the goddamn upside down bullshit and fighting that Demogorgon thing. Then, it was Nancy breaking his heart and leaving him utterly destroyed, and as if it wasn't enough, right after that, it was him making sure the little nerds didn't die, while also killing yet another version of those Demogorgon motherfuckers that Dustin baptized as Demo-dogs. In the middle of all that, it was also Billy Hargrove beating the ever-loving shit out of him.

Anyone could say he went through all that because of his own fault, but try as he might, he can never avoid being involved in fucked up and crazy situations.

So, even if being involved with Billy Hargrove wasn't in his plans, the moment he let his guard down, danger was *running* to him.

Billy Hargrove is dangerous and insufferable. He's like fighting a hundred demo-dogs at once. He's also beaten the shit out of Steve, shoved, terrorized and just been a total dick to his middle-school gang of friends. Steve recognizes he's also an asshole, but he likes to

think he's the likable kind of asshole. Billy is the kind of asshole you want nothing to do with, unless you have a death wish.

Steve seems to have a death wish he's really not that aware of.

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It's weird how it starts. He must have suspected before, he really should have because the signs were all there, starting with Billy apologizing not too long after he beat his face in. Of course he didn't go public about it or even looked at Steve in the eye while he did it, but he sounded defeated and *sad*, which Steve would have never expected coming from someone like Billy.

He had caught Steve just sitting on the ground, with his head resting on the wall behind him with his eyes closed. He really was just taking a break from everyone and everything, minding his own business, when he heard someone approaching. He guessed it was maybe Tommy or Carol or whomever, really, but when he heard nothing but the steps getting closer stop, he opened his eyes, and he didn't expect to see Billy Hargrove standing there. He looked at Steve right in the eye, and then deflated, leaning against the wall and looking down with his arms crossed across his half naked chest.

Steve was puzzled but didn't say anything. He just tensed, getting a rush of adrenalin, and looked at the other boy expecting an insult, or for him to attack Steve.

None of those ever came.

"Look Harrington…I just wanted to apologize for the other night. I didn't mean to-…It kinda got out of hand."

Steve was speechless, to say the least. His eyebrows shot up so high that they were almost touching his hairline. He didn't say anything for a while, and he felt Billy getting impatient beside him.

"Don't sweat it man, I get it if you just want me to fuck off, but…

yeah, just…yeah."

Billy never looked up to Steve, and as he was just turning around to leave, when Steve finally found his voice and spoke up, a little uncertain.

"I- I…its fine I guess…we're good." Billy stilled, and looked at Steve, assessing. He then nodded, and looked everywhere else but at Steve and extended his hand. Steve took a second, swallowed, accepted the hand with a firm grip and shook it.

"Alright, King Steve."

That same afternoon, when he was giving the kids a ride home after the AV Club, all of them seemed to be in the same shocked haze as Steve was, but so much more visibly, it was almost comical. Steve couldn't help but ask what was up.

Turns out, when Billy went to pick up Max, he had apologized in front of all of them to Lucas. He simply said had said he was sorry. He didn't wait for an answer and left with a just as stunned Max on the passenger seat.

Steve almost thought that he had slipped into some weird twilight zone shit. Or even the upside down. Billy Hargrove apologizing and being less of an aggressive dick was even stranger than fighting interdimensional monsters and hiding telekinetic kids.

Everything changed from then on.

Billy and Steve started being amicable, not in the sense that all of a sudden they were best friends, but they had something going on that was *close* to what a friendship was supposed to be. They sat next to each other in the classes they shared and sometimes even paired up when there was an assignment which required a partner. Sometimes, they would smoke together under the bleachers, talking shit and just being. They joked around, and the kind of shit they laughed about sometimes made Steve remember who he used to be before Nancy

came along. He had been a real tool, less significantly than Billy is (was?), but a tool nonetheless. It was nice though, getting a chance to act like a dumbass teenager again, and forgetting all about heartbreak, future, and all that shit he wasn't prepared to deal with.

The fact that their relationship improved didn't mean that that sense of danger that oozed off of Billy just vanished. Steve was aware of the fact that he was playing with fire hanging out with Billy, because as nice as things were going, Billy was still an asshole full of rage and violence. He was so much nicer than he used to be, of course he was, but he still had his difficult moments. Steve had to learn how to be patient. When Billy was angry, he unloaded in whatever was in his near proximity, whether it was physically or verbally. The first times, some of the shit Billy said really stung, but after some time, Steve realized he said and did hurtful shit so he didn't have to hurt alone. Steve learned how to be patient, and patience gave its result.

One day, after a particularly rough night caused by his asshole of a father, Billy finally opened up to Steve. He didn't say anything for hours, just listening to Billy talk and sob. Steve realized that Billy wasn't as unbreakable as people thought, because he was actually already broken. That night, when Steve saw the final devastated look in Billy's blue eyes, he kept quiet and just hugged him. That first hug that lasted for hours, until Billy stopped crying, was also the first time they had ever touched for real, because their rocky start in practice, then the beating at the Byer's house, and later, the playful shoves and pokes, didn't really count.

Billy and Steve actually slept in the same bed that night. Billy was too emotionally drained to sleep all alone in the guest room, seeing as he didn't protest or punch Steve when he suggested they share his bed. He just went and laid there, almost like a ragdoll. Steve laid right beside him silently. They didn't touch or talk until morning came.

Everything felt different after that night.

They didn't act weird around each other when they woke up and went to have breakfast in the diner just outside of town. Billy was a little guarded and uncertain at first, like as if he had the feeling Steve might make fun of him or suddenly just decide to throw him out of his house and tell him to get lost. Steve wouldn't do that *ever* of course, so he just smiled, and as always, he said "Morning, sunshine," when he saw Billy come out of the bathroom. The look and smile Billy gave him was one that Steve understood, was one of a kind.

The touchy-feely thing became quite common between them after that, but obviously not when people were looking. It was just a thing they did, like when they went to the quarry at night to smoke and drink, they'd lay in the hood of Billy's Camaro side by side really close to each other. Or when Billy got another beating by his father (which was at least 3 to 4 times a week), Steve would clean his cuts, give him some pills, and bandage whatever he thought looked really bad. He always did it with gentle hands, and they never spoke. Billy just looked at him with an intense stare the whole time, which of course was, when his father didn't lose it completely and hit him in the face, causing his eye to close.

They also slept together a lot in Steve's bed. It was convenient and… *nice*. Steve had trouble sleeping since the demo-dog shit and could only ever really rest if he was with someone else, and Billy, after the breaking point where he opened up, realized that he was touch, company and affection starved, not that he would admit it out loud even if they pointed a gun at him, but it was nice to feel the heat radiating from another body while he slept, making him feel less alone.

Steve knew that sharing something so intimate like sleeping - which by the way in his opinion was even more serious than getting physical with someone - with Billy could end up badly for the both of them. If Steve's parents ever came early one day and found them sleeping in the same bed, or if Billy's dad found out how close they'd became, or even just if someone at school decided to pay close attention and analyze the looks they exchanged, they'd be utterly fucked.

The danger didn't come from Billy now, or else Steve wouldn't sleep next to him nearly every night, but it did come from getting involved *with* Billy.

Then one night they get shitfaced with Steve's dad expensive liquor, and they also happen to smoke some weed, and it turns out to be a mistake. It isn't so clear in Steve's head how it happens, so he has to fill the story with what he remembers. What he remembers is the following: they start to drink as soon as Billy gets inside the house, and when the bottle they were drinking from is drained to approximately past the half, they start blaring the first cassette they find. Then they drink some more, and Billy takes out the weed. They smoke, and Steve's already dizzy head gets even worse, and he's laughing because Billy has decided to start dancing in the middle of the room, and he joins him. They are dancing around each other like crazy people while shouting the words to Girls Just Wanna Have Fun, until Steve trips on his own feet and falls to the ground while taking Billy down with him. They end up carelessly in the carpeted floor, laughing and panting. And then, Steve's not really sure how it happens, but before he even registers it, Billy is on top of him and their lips are inches away from touching. And just like that, Steve and Billy are kissing. It starts slow at first, the both of them experimenting what it feels like. Billy's lips are soft and plush, Steve likes how they slide against his own. The hesitation doesn't last much, because in a second the kiss is turning into something more. Billy bites Steve's lower lip, and he gasps. Right after he releases Steve's lip, he licks it and then that's it. They kiss sloppily, gasping and panting into each other's mouths, and before they are aware of it, they are shirtless, pulling each other's hair and raking blunt nails against skin.

The first time, they both don't even make it as far as taking off their underwear. The second time though, they have moved up into the bed, and before each other's warmth and kisses became too much to resist, they make sure to be completely naked.

Teenage hormones are truly a blessing, Steve thinks, because as far as

he can remember, they'd gone at it at least 4 times without taking long breaks in between. They could've done it more times, perhaps, if they had been sober.

Steve finds out that night, that he loves the feeling of rough hands touching his body, dick, hair, and the pulsing feeling of another cock sliding against his own. Steve also decides he really likes hearing a deep voice whisper and falter with pleasure in his ear; feeling hard muscles as his hands roam, maybe even more than soft curves, and also the feeling of stubble rubbing in the sensitive skin of his neck, while he's completely dominated and man-handled. He loves the musky, masculine smell of another boy mixing with his own. Steve realizes that night, among other things, why all the girls seemed to practically *worship* Billy.

Steve's consciousness surfaces for a second or two that night, telling him that this was by far one of the most dangerous things he's ever done. There's no going back, in any sense, after everything that had happened. Really though, there was no going back the moment he decided to be friends with Billy Hargrove.

This was just a matter of time.

When Steve wakes up the morning after, he feels a heavy arm thrown over his lower back. He's a little bit confused, but it's not like it hasn't happened before when Billy and him had shared the bed, so he just sighs and buries his face in the pillow. His head is thumping, and he feels like absolute shit; his tongue like sandpaper, his eyes puffy and his stomach grumbling in protest. He's lying there, trying to go back to sleep, but then he remembers everything that had happened. He's frozen in place, replaying everything in his head, and as if it wasn't enough, he also realizes that he's completely naked, and that so is Billy. He's afraid of Billy's reaction – of how this could affect their relationship – more than anything. He's waiting for a "If you tell anyone about this, you're fucking dead". He isn't sure he's ready to hear that.

Billy wakes up, slowly at first, pulling a terrified Steve closer to him. Then he *really* wakes up and tenses, but doesn't recoil, or beat up Steve, or just run away. After a minute or two have passed, where both Billy and Steve pretend they are asleep, Steve turns around to face Billy, expecting something (anything, really).

They just look at each other in the eyes, searching. They look confused, terrified, and also terribly hungover. Surprisingly, after a couple minutes of awkward expectant silence, Billy breaks it off still staring intensely at Steve, saying lowly, "Morning, Sunshine," like they always teasingly tell each other. He looks like he's challenging whatever his better judgement is telling him.

Steve is a little bit caught off guard by that, but he smiles because he just can't help it, and says, "Morning," He is rewarded by a genuine smile from Billy.

Steve feels immense relief. He doesn't know that Billy feels the same.

They don't discuss whatever it is they have. After that night, their relationship stays almost exactly the same, with the only exception that now whenever they can get away with it, they make out, or manage a quick handjob. The only thing they do very different form before, is not showering at the same time or next to each other after practice in order to avoid giving themselves away by getting hard.

They also now cuddle at night deliberately, when they share the bed.

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Nancy, *of course,* notices. She approaches Steve very discreetly at one of their last basketball practices; they are graduating in a month. He doesn't miss how Billy stares daggers at her.

"Steve…I've been meaning to talk to you about something….I just don't know how to…I don't want to *offend* you in case I'm wrong."

“C’mon Nance, its fine. Just talk to me. You are making me nervous.”

“Look, I’m gonna be very straight forward,” She says in a hushed voice and staring intently at him, “are you….Do you have *anything* going on with Billy Hargrove?”

Steve sighs, looks at Nancy, and he just knows she would never betray his trust. She’s an amazing girl, Steve’s aware of it, and if he could trust anyone else that wasn’t himself, Dustin or Billy, it’d be Nancy. Also, he was a shit liar, so if he lied to her about this, she’d notice.

“Yes,” Steve says in the same hushed voice after a moment, “we’re…. I don’t know what we are. But yeah, we have something.”

Nancy looks at Billy, who he supposes is in the other side of the gym, pretending like he’s not watching the both of them talk. She then looks back at Steve in the eyes and her lip curves up a little bit, “I really don’t wanna judge, but why *him*, Steve?”

“He’s not so bad these days. He’s actually pretty decent.”

He doesn’t feel the imminent danger alert in his mind after that confession. He actually feels warm inside, and looks back at Billy and winks at him. Billy very briefly smiles that private, genuine smile he only ever directs at Steve, and goes about whatever he was doing.

“You can’t tell anyone though, you know that right?”

“Well Steve, if you keep that look on your face whenever he’s around, I won’t need to tell anyone.” Nancy smiles affectionately, and grabs his hand, “Jonathan was the first one to notice, but don’t worry okay? We would never tell on you…Although Billy might deserve it, but you like him, so.”

“Yeah…thanks, Nance.”

Later that afternoon, when they are at Steve’s house sitting by the

pool, he tells Billy what happened. It doesn't go that well at first.

"Why did you tell her?! What the fuck were you thinking?!"

"She already knew…Byers noticed first and *suggested* it to her."

"What are we gonna do now, Steve?" Billy is really exasperated. He's not angry though. He's never angry at Steve anymore.

"Nothing. She promised me they won't tell anyone."

Billy scoffs and lights up a cigarette, "And you are so calm because she *promised*? Steve, you've got to be fucking kidding me, man."

Steve puts his hands on his hips and rolls his eyes, "Look, stranger things have happened in this fucking town than the school assholes being queer, alright? So calm the fuck down."

Billy just looks at him, the fire and rage he saw The Night at the Byers' house come back all of a sudden and Steve tenses up. He's sure it has to do with him saying that he and Billy are 'queers'. Had this happened 5 months ago, he'd be ready to fight Billy or run. He now just sighs, tries to relax and holds Billy murderous stare.

"I'm not a fucking queer."

Steve almost laughs at that. "Yeah, sure. I am not one either, but we still fuck almost every night."

"So? That doesn't make me a queer."

"Well, yeah whatever man, but what I really think makes the difference here is that we love each other."

The fire behind Billy's eyes flares up for a second. He balls his fists, but as he usually does now, he deflates in a second. He stops looking at Steve's earnest eyes, looking down instead. Neither of them speak for a while. When Billy does, he's still looking down, but his voice sounds a bit amused.

"I can't fucking believe you implied just now for the fucking first time, in the middle of all this shit, that you love me."

"…I thought that fact was kinda obvious? Even before this happened."

"Harrington, you are an asshat, you know that?"

"I can't believe you just called me an asshat after I told you that I loved you."

"Well, fuck you," Billy says with no heat, "I love you too, but you are still an asshat."

No one else notices, thank whatever God is watching them. Steve thinks that even if people at school noticed, it wouldn't be a big deal, because they were graduating very soon. They would have problems if Billy's dad noticed though, but as much of a motherfucker as he is, he's dumb as a rock, and so he doesn't see what's right in front of him. Steve's parents practically don't exist, so he doesn't worry much about them.

Steve thinks that people just gossiped about their friendship at first because it was kind of weird that they became close all of a sudden, but they were all dumbasses and unless they explicitly saw them being all lovey-dovey, they wouldn't suspect. Also, Billy continued 'dating' girls – Billy dating girls meant that whenever Tommy asked something about his love or sex life at lunch, he'd talk about some imaginary chick he picked up in the next town. He'd be vague about the details, and if someone questioned why he didn't date anyone from school or from town anymore, he'd say: because there wasn't anyone worth the effort; they were all 'fucking cows'.

People didn't pay much attention to Steve anymore, so they could care less about who he dated.

They had a good cover.

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Graduation feels like a breath of fresh air. It used to feel like oncoming danger to Steve, because he didn't know what he was going to do with his life. Actually, a lot of things used to feel like danger to Steve; Billy being one of them. But graduation, along with the future and Billy stopped feeling scary once they all mixed together. Future was living happily with Billy, away from Hawkins and everything that reminded him of bad things. Graduation was the means to obtain it.

They decided that the night after graduation, they would leave town together. If they anticipated it to anyone, they would've tried to stop them, but this was their one chance at freedom and at being together without hiding so much. They'd also decided to take Billy's Camaro and leave Steve's Beamer. Steve could always go back after some time to sell it, and they could use the money to settle.

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They do say goodbye, in their own ways, to the ones who are important to them. Steve says goodbye trying not to cry to Dustin, who doesn't understand anything, but returns the hug Steve gives him, holding him tight, and saying " 'S okay Steve, whatever it is, I'm here for you always." The other kids look just as puzzled, but hug Steve tightly too. Then they jump all over him, making him laugh and fall to the ground.

He also says goodbye to Nancy and even Jonathan. Unlike the kids, they do understand what he's up to. Nancy looks like she wants to say something, but then looks at Jonathan, and merely hugs him tight. Jonathan shakes his hand and *almost* looks sad. "Be happy, Steve." he says. Nancy lets some tears spill.

Billy says goodbye to Max. After the bat incident, their relationship improved a lot, and he realized he actually liked her. Not that he'd ever tell her, of course. He doesn't tell her either, that she's the only

thing he'll miss from Hawkins, Indiana.

He barges into her room, hoping she's there, a couple hours prior to his departure. She looks a bit wary at first, questioning him, but then he just strides towards her with a decided face, while she looks about ready to flee, but then he just puts his arms around her, hugging her and blinking hard so he doesn't start crying. She's frozen in place, but seeing as he doesn't move to attack her or something, she goes to return the hug, a little bit scared. After some time has passed, and before she can ask him what was that all about, he lets her go, deposits a note in her hand and holds her shoulders, looking at her straight into her confused eyes, "Take care kid, and don't ever let Neil touch you, okay? If he does, I swear to God I'll come all the way back here to fuck him up." Then he lets her go, and is turning to leave before he starts crying. As he's almost out of Max's room, he hears her say weakly, "You take care too."

They leave that night, Steve with 3 suitcases and Billy with one, and two duffel bags (one full of his music). Their savings combined are not much, but they figure it is enough to get where they want to go, and survive for a bit until they both can find jobs.

Steve leaves a note for his parents, telling them he's left for a "vacation" and that he'll be home soon. When he does go back, he plans on telling them that his trip has made him realize he wants to live away from them, and that he's taking his car. He knows they won't be opposed, maybe his mother will cry and his father will be kind of mad that he won't be working for his business, but he doesn't mind, his older brother who's in college, and with whom he doesn't speak, will what he can't.

When Steve gets in the passenger seat, he just sits there, a little bit overwhelmed. Billy notices and asks, putting a hand over his knee,

“Everything okay?” Steve thinks that Billy might be imagining he’s having second thoughts about this, but he’s never been surer about something. He’s just a bit nervous.

“Yeah, yeah…everything’s fine. I just feel a bit…nervous or whatever.” Steve covers Billy’s hand with his own.

“Yeah, me too.”

They stay like that, looking at each other for a little bit, and Steve asks, “You say bye to Max?”

Billy looks down, and nods, “Yeah,” Then he looks up and says, “I left her a note too….just about taking whatever she thinks is valuable in my room to hers as soon as she sees me leave, and give it to you when you go back.” He doesn’t tell Steve he had also written a ‘Thank you, I’m sorry.’ at the bottom.

“Good. I left a note for my parents too.”

Billy nods again, and then asks looking down, “What did Byers and Wheeler say?”

“They said they hope we find happiness.”

Steve uses his other hand to take Billy’s chin between his fingers and make him look up to him. Billy does and apparently is about ready to cry, if the sound of his voice is anything to go by.

“I hope we find it too.”

Steve smiles tenderly and says, “We will, Billy, we will.”

Then he leans towards Billy, and kisses his lips chastely, but lingering. Without another word, after Steve sits back, they pull away from Steve’s house and leave town.

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The old Steve would have never done something like this. The old Steve would have never tried his luck, or done something as crazy as running away with a trouble *guy* who was danger in a human form.

Danger was part of his life now, and he loved every second of it. He didn't mind if it took his life over anymore.